THE EISENHOWER LIBRARY
3 1151 02743 3311

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE SEVENTH

Convention of Delegates

FROM THE

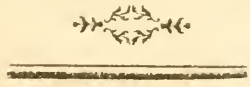
ABOLITION SOCIETIES

Eſtabliſhed in different parts of the United States,

ASSEMBLED AT

PHILADELPHIA,

ON THE THIRD DAY OF JUNE, ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND ONE, AND CONTINUED BY ADJOURNMENTS UNTIL THE SIXTH DAY OF THE SAME MONTH, INCLUSIVE.



—*Philadelphia:*—

PRINTED BY ZACHARIAH POULSON, JUNIOR,

No. 106, *Cheſnut-ſtreet.*

1801.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE SEVENTH

Convention of Delegates.

Philadelphia, June third, 1801,

10 *o'clock, A. M.*

A NUMBER of Delegates from Societies for promoting the abolition of ſlavery, eſtabliſhed in various parts of the United States, aſſembled at this time in the City Hall; when it appeared, from credentials produced, that the following perſons were deputed by their reſpective Societies, to repreſent them in this Convention.

Willet Seaman,
Abraham Ogier Stanſbury,
Adrian Hageman,
Nehemiah Allen,
Daniel D. Waters,
} *From New-York.*

Joſeph

Joſeph Bloomfield,
Richard Hartſhorne,
Thomas Clement,
Robert Smith, jun.
Phinehas Lord, } *From New-Jerſey.*

Thomas Harriſon,
James Milnor,
Walter Franklin,
Samuel Bettle,
George Williams,
Othniel Alſop,
Robert Frazer, } *From Pennſylvania.*

John Vaughan,
Cyrus Newlin, } *From Delaware.*

John R. Fairlamb, - - *From Richmond.*

Of whom the following attended.

Adrian Hageman,
Nehemiah Allen,
Daniel D. Waters,
Richard Hartſhorne,
Thomas Clement,
Robert Smith, jun.
Thomas Harriſon,
Walter Franklin,
Samuel Bettle,
George Williams,
Robert Frazer,
Othniel Alſop,
Cyrus Newlin,
John Vaughan,
John R. Fairlamb.

Richard Hartſhorne was unanimouſly choſen Preſident, Othniel Alſop was appointed Secretary, and John Raſield, Door-keeper.

The following communications from the Societies of New-York, New-Jerſey, Pennſylvania, Delaware and Virginia, were read, and referred to Nehemiah Allen, Thomas Clement, Thomas Harriſon, John Vaughan, and John R. Fairlamb, who were deſired to report to a future meeting the objects which might appear to them proper to come under further notice.

Report of the "New-York Society for promoting the manumiſſion of Slaves, and protecting ſuch of them as have been or may be liberated," To the Convention of Delegates from the ſeveral Manumiſſion Societies in the United States, to be holden in Philadelphia, in June next.

SINCE the laſt report, of the Society to the Convention, they have been going on in the purſuit of the great object of their aſſociation, without materially deviating from their ordinary courſe of proceedings; and they have ſtill the pleaſure to inform the Convention, that their exertions in the cauſe of humanity continue to be attended with a very pleaſing degree of ſucceſs.

At the date of their laſt report, there were forty perſons ſaid to be unlawfully held in bondage, under their care; ſince that time, twenty-four new caſes have been added to the number; of theſe perſons, thirteen have been liberated through their exertions—ſeventeen have been diſcharged from their care for want of ſufficient evidence to ſupport further proceedings—and thirty-four remain on their minutes as objects of future attention.

The Society have been for ſome time paſt informed, that the trade in negroes from the coaſt of Africa to the Weſt-India Iſlands, was very extenſively purſued from the States of Rhode-Iſland and Maſſachuſetts; and they have recently received information, that upwards of fifty veſſels from thoſe States now are, or very lately were, on the African coaſt, engaged in this inhuman traffic.

A Commander of one of theſe veſſels, being in this city on his return from St. Bartholomews, in the month of February laſt, was arreſted at the ſuit of the Society, under the law of the United States and is now a priſoner in this diſtrict. The Society feel confident, that juſtice in this caſe will be had; and they cannot but hope, that the puniſhment of a few ſuch offenders, will put an end in our country, to the unjuſt and cruel trade in queſtion.

By order of the Society, ſuits were inſtituted laſt year, againſt certain foreigners, for a traffic in black people from this ſtate to the ſouthern ſtates; theſe ſuits have not yet received a deciſion, owing to the abſence of ſome witneſſes who are neceſſary in order to the proſecution of the ſame; there is reaſon, however, to expect that they will terminate favorably to the cauſe of humanity.

The African School under the care of the Society, has been gradually increaſing ſince the laſt report to the Convention, and is now in a flouriſhing ſtate; for ſome time after the eſtabliſhment of this inſtitution, it was with reluctance that many of the people of color, ignorant of the benefits of Education, conſented to ſend their children to ſchool; a very favorable alteration has taken place in this reſpect; they have become more generally impreſſed with a ſenſe of the advantages and importance of Education, and more diſpoſed to avail themſelves of the privilege offered to them. The greater part of thoſe whoſe children attend the ſchool, contribute ſomething toward its ſupport, according to their ability and inclination; the effect of this arrangement is found highly uſeful: it not only renders the maintenance of the ſeminary more ſecure, and takes off a part of the burthen from the Society, but it, alſo, upon a very obvious principle, binds the contributors to the ſchool—

gives them a kind of intereſt in its proſperity—and excites them to keep their children more punctual in their attendance.

This inſtitution now contains about one hundred and thirty children of both ſexes, who continue in general, to exhibit the ſame good order, and the ſame capacity and diſpoſition to learn as formerly—no material alteration has taken place ſince the laſt report, except the pleaſing growth before mentioned.

The laws reſpecting ſlavery in the State of New York, remain nearly as they were at the date of the laſt report; at the ſeſſion of the Legiſlature of this State which was holden in the beginning of the year 1800, two Juſtices of the Supreme Court were appointed to reviſe the laws of the State, and to reduce into ſingle acts, the proviſions which were before diſtributed into many: among the reſt, all the former laws concerning ſlaves were reviſed and incorporated into one, with the addition of certain clauſes recommended in petitions promoted by the Society and forwarded to the Legiſlature, prohibiting, under a very ſevere penalty, the importation and exportation of ſlaves and ſervants, unleſs with certain preſcribed reſtrictions and limitations—A copy of ſaid law will accompany this report.

The Society conclude, by obſerving, that the principles of humanity and freedom, the primary objects of their aſſociation, are gradually gaining ground in this State, and that appearances in general are ſuch, as to make them believe their exertions have been uſeful, and that there is encouragement to continue and extend them.

WILLET SEAMAN, *Preſident.*

New-York, 5th. mo. 20th. 1801.

VALENTINE SEAMAN, *Secretary.*

To the Convention of Delegates from the different Abolition Societies, to be held in Philadelphia, in the Sixth month, (June) next.

THE New-Jerſey Society for promoting the gradual abolition of ſlavery, report,

That fully concurring in the propriety of the recommendation contained in the Conventions' addreſs of laſt year, with reſpect to holding another Convention, we have appointed as Delegates, JoſephBloomfield, Richard Hartſhorne, Thomas Clement, Robert Smith, jun. and Phinehas Lord, to repreſent this Society in the enſuing Convention, and they are authorized to aid in the formation of a Conſtitution, as recommended in the addreſs.

The circumſtances of the caſe mentioned in the report from the Richmond Society, ſo far obtained our ſympathy towards them, that the Preſident was authorized to tranſmit from our ſmall fund, the ſum of fifty dollars, which has been done, and the receipt thereof duly acknowledged. The hint relative to annual contributions from the different Societies towards a general fund, to be at the diſpoſal of the Convention, gave riſe to ſome diſcuſſion of the ſubject, which however was not fully decided on, but poſtponed to a future time.

The ſcattered ſituation of this Society, occaſions many embarraſſments and difficulties, of which Societies that are more compact, have no experience. Thoſe members who conſtitute the acting committees, are often ſo far apart, as to render it impracticable for them to act in concert in caſes of emergency, and are obliged to content themſelves with convening but three or four times a year. To add to the difficulty, in thoſe parts of the

the State, where ſlaves are moſt numerous, and conſequently where caſes requiring interference moſt frequently occur, the cauſe of Abolition has but very few zealous ſupporters, and the buſineſs from thence, almoſt, or altogether devolves upon thoſe of the adjacent counties where Societies are regularly formed: Hence it follows, that the proſecution of caſes, whenever they occur, neceſſarily requires a conſiderable ſacrifice of time, and not unfrequently many days riding in ſerving writs, collecting evidence, attending Courts, &c. It therefore often happens, that caſes are unavoidably a long time before they can be brought to an iſſue. To the ſame cauſe may be attributed our deficiency in conforming to the ſeveral recommendations and requiſitions of the Convention—conſiderable attention has been from time to time paid to theſe ſeveral ſubjects, and pains taken to promote a compliance—exertions have again been repeated ſince laſt year; in a few inſtances the buſineſs has been faithfully attended to, but generally the accounts we have received are very imperfect, and conſequently the information hitherto forwarded, or which we ſhall be enabled now to communicate, muſt be partial and incomplete; within a large part of the State, and where ſlavery is moſt encouraged, as there are very few firm Friends to Abolition, and the few watched with an evil eye, it is very difficult to procure a correct repreſentation of the ſtate of the blacks; even in thoſe counties where emancipation is moſt approved, it is not eaſy to obtain a minute and juſt account; it is well known to thoſe who have much engaged in Abolition concerns, that although there are great numbers who ſecretly wiſh well to the cauſe, and are ever ready to commend the ſucceſsful exertions of others, yet very few of them are willing to

devote their time and attention, or to engage in the laborious parts of the buſineſs. Such information as we are enabled to give, we ſhall now proceed to ſtate in regular order.

Liſts of the officers, and other members of the Society have been made out, which will be annexed to, and forwarded with this report.

Conſiderable attention has been given towards procuring from our ſeveral county meetings an account of their proceedings in relieving perſons unlawfully held in bondage, in purſuance whereof we have obtained ſtatements from ſeveral counties which we ſhall ſubjoin: by theſe it appears, that in the county of Burlington, there have been, ſince the commencement of the inſtitution, eleven caſes of perſons relieved or reſcued from ſlavery, by the interference of the Society. In the county of Glouceſter nine, and in the counties of Middleſex and Eſſex, two. From the other two counties in which Societies have been eſtabliſhed, no information has been received—there are a number of caſes on the minutes of the acting committees, ſeveral of which are now pending in ſuit. We may further add, that it is believed many ſucceſsful exertions have been from time to time made by benevolent minded individuals for the relief of this oppreſſed people, no account of which has been or could be exhibited.

The information we have received on the ſubject will not enable us to convey a very explicit repreſentation of the condition of the blacks—their circumſtances eſſentially vary in different parts of theState—In Eaſt-Jerſey, ſlaves are very numerous, and although inſtances not unfrequently occur, of very cruel uſage to them, yet in general they are mildly treated, more eſpecially among the Low-Dutch,

Dutch, who are poſſeſſed of a large number, and conduct towards them with great lenity; they watch them cloſe, and oblige them to work hard, but in return feed and clothe them well. Although the oppoſition publicly made from this part of the State to the Abolition of Slavery has hitherto been ſo formidable, it is nevertheleſs believed that the cauſe is faſt gaining ground there, and that light is ſpreading; More of a diſpoſition has lately been manifeſted by Slave-holders to countenance ſuch of their ſlaves as are anxious to uſe endeavours to purchaſe their freedom. The following account, forwarded from the county meeting for Eſſex and Middleſex, we believe, may be taken as conveying in general terms the ſituation of the blacks in the eaſtern counties, "They appear, moſtly, pretty comfortably provided for, and ſome of the free, hold, faſt and moveable property—the induſtrious among them find pretty ſteady employment, but the moral conduct of many does not appear ſo encouraging and praiſe worthy, as would be deſirable." Throughout the weſtern part of the State, there are, comparatively, but few ſlaves, and the number of theſe continually diminiſhing. Some conception of this may be formed, by the following information ſtated in the report from the county of Glouceſter.

At the time the cenſus was taken by order of the General Government in 1791, there were in that county 191 ſlaves; when taken by direction of this Society in 1799, only 47, and this preſent year, according to the cenſus now taking by Government, (nearly gone through) the number is ſtill leſs. We think it may be ſaid, that with a few exceptions, the ſlaves in this part of the ſtate, are kindly uſed, more ſo it is apprehended of latter time; and the practice of ſlave-holding is becoming daily

daily more unpopular. In ſpeaking of the moral conduct and general character of thoſe who are free, we are ſomewhat embarraſſed, but we apprehend that the following deſcription, intended more particularly to fit Burlington and Glouceſter counties, will generally apply throughout the weſtern part of the State—Many are looſe in their morals, too fond of unprofitable company, idling away their time, and waſting their ſubſtance; but as a general obſervation, we believe it will be found true upon inveſtigation, that waving any allowance which in juſtice out to be made for the great diſadvantages under which they labour, and contraſting their conduct with that of the poorer claſs of whites, the balance will be rather in favour of the black people: as domeſtic ſervants, waiters, coachmen, &c. the preference is decidedly given them, and as labourers they conſtitute a valuable part of the community—A few are mechanics, and ſome of them very reſpectable, and there appears an increaſing attention to the placing out children in a way to acquire trades. We could enumerate a variety of inſtances, of blacks, who in their reſpective neighbourhoods, exhibit examples of ſobriety, induſtry, oeconomy, and uprightneſs, well worthy of imitation, regulating their families well, and reſpected by the white inhabitants. Some of them hold real eſtate, free and diſincumbered, and a conſiderable number ſupport themſelves and families comfortably. Attention has been given in various neighbourhoods, to promote their moral and religious improvement.

An account of Free-ſchools in Burlington for the inſtruction of the blacks, was forwarded by this Society three years ago. Since that period, thoſe ſchools have been ſuffered to drop, but it is pleaſing at this time to obſerve the good fruits of which

which they were productive, manifeſted in ſeveral ſtriking inſtances. A ſimilar eſtabliſhment was likewiſe, for ſome time continued at Salem, and another for a ſhorter period, at Trenton. The ſchooling of black children does not in general appear to obtain that attention which its importance requires, yet it is believed there is a growing care in this reſpect. We do not know of any ſchools at preſent among us, excluſively for them, but in moſt parts of the ſtate, and very commonly in the weſtern diviſion, they are incorporated with white children in the various ſmall ſchools ſcattered over the country. In the city of Burlington there is a Free-ſchool, for the education of poor children ſupported by the profits of an eſtate left for that particular purpoſe, which ſchool is open for the reception of black, equally with white, children. The account from Glouceſter county on this head ſtates, that in ſeveral parts of that county, there are funds eſtabliſhed for the ſchooling of poor children, white and black, without diſtinction, in the whole about £1000; and many of the black children, being placed by their parents under the care of white maſters, receive at leaſt as good a moral, and ſchool education, as the lower claſs of whites.

We tranſmitted in 1796, the reports of trials and adjudications relative to Africans. A ſtatement of ſuch as have taken place ſince that period will be tranſmitted.

No effort has been attempted ſince the reviſion of our Slave-laws in 1798, to obtain an amelioration of the laws on this ſubject. It was apprehended that a ſuſpenſion of ſuch exertions for ſometime would be beſt.

The recommendation relative to periodical diſcourſes on the ſubject of ſlavery, and the means of its abolition, has not been put in practice, from an apprehenſion, that it would not be pro uctive of much advantage in this State.

Our reſpective county meetings have repeatedly been adviſed to keep accurate regiſters of all deeds of manumiſſion executed within their precincts. We believe the recommendation has been in a good meaſure complied with.

There is a Standing Committee of this Society denominated, "The Committee of Publication;" the deſign of which is to publiſh from time to time in ſuch manner as they may deem expedient, pieces, extracts, or eſſays, on the ſubject of emancipation, tending to promote the views of this Aſſociation; we could wiſh that this mode of advancing the cauſe of Abolition, was more attended to, for we are convinced that much good might be done, by the diſtribution of ſuitable publications on the ſubject.

No inſtances have come to our knowledge of negroes from St. Domingo, retained here as ſlaves contrary to the decree of the National Convention of France.

Nothing has been done by direction of this Society to diſcourage the uſe of articles manufactured by ſlaves; but individuals, Members of the Society and others, have refrained from uſing them.

In the concluſion of our report, we cannot but lament, that at this period of time, juſt after the cloſe of the enlightened eighteenth century, the State of New-Jerſey, in the centre of the American Confederacy, ſo celebrated throughout the earth for Liberty and Independence, ſhould countenance

tenance, within its own boſom, the moſt palpable violation of thoſe boaſted equal rights, by withholding from ſeveral thouſand human beings their juſt and natural claim to Liberty. But we think there is reaſon to hope, that the pleadings of juſtice and humanity, in behalf of the oppreſſed, do, and will prevail. Let us not then be diſmayed, but perſevere in our exertions, until this dark ſpot upon the riſing character of our highly favoured country, be utterly obliterated.

Signed in behalf of a general meeting of the New-Jerſey Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, held at Burlington, Fifth-month fifth, 1801.

JOSEPH BLOOMFIELD, *Preſident.*

Atteſt.

ROBERT SMITH, jun. *Secretary.*

To the Convention of Delegates from the different Abolition Societies, propoſed to be held in the City of Philadelphia, on the third day of the ſixth month, 1801.

WE have with ſatisfaction complied with the recommendation of the laſt Convention, by electing Thomas Harriſon, James Milnor, Walter Franklin, Samuel Bettle, George Williams, Othniel Aſop, and Robert Frazer, to repreſent us in that which is propoſed to be held this year.

We

We continue to believe theſe Aſſemblies likely to prove eminently uſeful, and we cannot but regret, that the want of ſuch conviction, or other cauſes ſhould have occaſioned on the part of ſome of our ſiſter Societies, a leſs warm and zealous co-operation in their favour. A reciprocal communication of ſentiment and information on the intereſting objects of our inſtitutions, and a general conſiſtency of conduct and exertions, can, we conceive, in no better way be maintained, than through the medium of occaſional, or ſtated Conventions.

The Convention of laſt year was forcibly impreſſed with this perſuaſion, and have, therefore, ſuggeſted the idea of giving permanency to theſe eſtabliſhments, by the formation of a Conſtitution for their future government; we have given our concurrence to the plan, and have veſted in our preſent delegation, ſuitable powers for aiding in its completion.

Conſonant with this deſign, is that of eſtabliſhing a fund to be at the diſpoſal of theſe bodies; this alſo hath met our approbation, and we have agreed to aid it with an advance of one hundred dollars.

With the preſent communication you will receive a liſt of our officers for the preſent year, and of the members added to our Society ſince the date of our laſt addreſs; alſo the copy of a law, and of an article of the Conſtitution of Georgia, reſpecting the importation of ſlaves; we likewiſe tranſmit you a copy of an addreſs, which we have believed it our duty to lay before the people of colour in this city and ſuburbs; it was read to them by a committee appointed for that purpoſe, at their ſeveral places of worſhip; and alſo at three ſocieties

which

which they have formed with the benevolent deſign of aſſiſting each others families, in times of ſickneſs and misfortune. Their families were alſo viſited, and copies of the addreſs left with them. From the report of the committee it appears, that the number of families which they viſited was ſix hundred and fifty-nine, containing about twenty-three hundred and thirteen perſons; that their communications were received in a reſpectful manner, and that many evinced a lively and grateful ſenſe of our care and anxiety for their welfare. Several hundred blacks, and people of colour reſide in white families, and though they have not had the advantage of a perſonal viſit from the committee, many of them have been furniſhed with a copy of the addreſs.

A mixture of ſatisfaction and regret, muſt be experienced by every feeling mind, in the concluding obſervations of our committee; "The greater number," they ſay, "live decently and comfortably, many of them poſſeſſing houſes and other valuable property; ſome were found ſupporting their aged parents and grand parents, in a ſtate of eaſe and comfort, and others providing for orphan and deſtitute children; and on the whole, we are united in the opinion, that they live as reputably, and conduct themſelves as orderly, as white people poſſeſſing equal opportunities of improvement: yet it is with pain we have to obſerve, that idleneſs, diſſipation, and want of œconomy, have reduced ſome of their families to poverty and diſtreſs." The latter part of this deſcription is indeed a melancholy one, but we truſt in the bleſſing of Providence, on our continued exertions, for the intellectual and religious improvement of theſe people, as the ſureſt means of retaining, in the path

path of virtue, thoſe who have not yet forſaken it, and of once more adding to their number, thoſe who have been ſeduced away by the blandiſhments of folly and vice.

Schools for their education are now eſtabliſhed in the City and Liberties of Philadelphia, one of which is under our immediate inſpection; a liſt of them will accompany this addreſs. Subſcriptions have been obtained for this important object, amounting in the whole to 530 ½ dollars per annum for three years.

In reply to that part of the addreſs of the laſt Convention which relates to the inhuman practice of kidnapping free perſons, we have only to mention, that but two attempts of this kind within this ſtate have recently come to our knowledge, and as they are in a courſe of legal inveſtigation, we deem it improper to detail the particular circumſtances attending them.

The various requiſitions of former Conventions having been heretofore as fully anſwered as was in our power, and nothing further of a nature requiring preſent notice having ſince occurred, we conclude with wiſhing you harmony in your deliberations, and a ſucceſsful iſſue to your exertions in the cauſe of Juſtice and Humanity.

Signed by order and in behalf of the Pennſylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c.

JAMES PEMBERTON, *Preſident.*

Atteſt,

TIMOTHY PAXSON, } *Secretaries.*
SAMUEL HARVEY, }

In

In compliance with the requiſitions of former Conventions of Delegates from the ſeveral Abolition Societies, the Delaware Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, make the following,

Report,

THE Delaware Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and for the relief and protection of blacks and people of colour unlawfully held in bondage or otherwiſe oppreſſed, was eſtabliſhed on the twelfth day of the twelfth month, 1800.—A copy of our conſtitution, and a liſt of our preſent officers and members, accompany this report.

Dr. John Vaughan and Cyrus Newlin, are appointed on our part, to attend the Convention of Delegates, to be held the firſt fourth-day in the ſixth month, 1801, at Philadelphia.

This Society intends to have printed and publiſhed, copies of the Laws of the State of Delaware, ſo far as they regard the blacks and people of colour; and they propoſe, when that ſhall be done, to forward a copy to a future Convention.

A liſt of caſes now under the care of our acting committee is alſo herewith forwarded.

In this ſtate, ſlaves are generally treated leniently: there are nevertheleſs many perſons who, in defiance of the common duties of humanity, permit them to ſuffer, from ſcanty food and cloathing, and puniſh them cruelly.

The general temper of opinion, is againſt the freedom of perſons of colour, but this ſpirit is milder in the northern than in the ſouthern parts of this ſtate.

Several blacks in each of our counties hold real property, and thoſe are generally induſtrious and ſober perſons—we believe they cannot be accuſed of greater immoralities than the poorer claſs of white perſons—there are but few mechanics among the enſlaved or free blacks—they are in general day labourers or farmers.

By the cenſus made this year, it appears that there are in this ſtate, 2754 free blacks and people of colour, and 1838 ſlaves.

There is a diminution of ſeven hundred and twenty-four ſlaves ſince the year 1790. We ſuſpect this decreaſe has not ariſen entirely from the progreſs of the generous ſpirit of emancipation, but partly from the trade of exportation, which has been carried on for ſeveral years paſt.

A petition in favour of the gradual abolition of ſlavery was preſented to our Legiſlature at their laſt ſeſſion, but no meaſures were taken upon it.

The Society, as ſuch, has not yet been able to advance the education of blacks and people of colour, but a ſchool is kept here on the firſt day of the week by one of its members, who inſtructs them gratis, in reading, writing and arithmetic; ſeldom more than twenty ſcholars attend; they are generally attentive, and appear to receive inſtruction as readily as white perſons labouring under ſimilar diſadvantages.

No periodical diſcourſes have yet been eſtabliſhed.

No publications tending to promote the abolition of ſlavery have yet been diſtributed by us; but an addreſs to the public on this important ſubject is now prepared, and will ſpeedily be publiſhed.

We

We have not yet tried any cafe under the decree of the National Convention of France.

Nothing has been done by this Society towards diſcouraging the uſe of articles manufactured by ſlaves.

The addreſs from the Convention of 1796, to the free people of colour has not yet been diſtributed by the Society.

Signed by order of the Delaware Society, by

FRANCIS A. LATTA, *Preſident.*

Wilmington, fifth month, 23d. 1801.

ZACHARIAH JESS, *Secretary.*

Addreſs of the Virginia Abolition Society, to the enſuing General Convention, to be holden in Philadelphia.

Friends and Fellow Labourers,

IT is a conſolation to us, amidſt the many dangers and difficulties with which we are ſurrounded, to obſerve that firm and perſevering diſpoſition, manifeſted in the addreſs of the laſt Convention to the different Societies, to purſue, with unremitting vigilance, the great and benevolent objects which gave exiſtence to our inſtitutions.

While we ſincerely unite in opinion, with the laſt Convention, as to the importance of fitting the minds of our unfortunate brethren of African deſcent,

ſcent. "To fill that ſtation in the ſcale of being, from which they have been forced by the domineering ſpirit of power and uſurpation," we are nevertheleſs, obliged at preſent to turn our attention from the ſubject of education, in order to direct our public efforts againſt that rapacious diſpoſition which emboldens many petty tyrants among us to trample upon the rights of this people, even in violation of the laws of *our* ſtate.

We have inſtituted many ſuits on behalf of theſe ſufferers; and numerous are the inſtances of unlawful oppreſſion, which ſtill cry aloud to humanity for that aſſiſtance it is not in our power to afford. This is, indeed, a melancholy criſis to us; many, alſo, who were once hearty in the cauſe of emancipation, taking a retroſpect view of the recent plot which threatened our internal tranquility with a revolutionary convulſion, have now thought proper to abandon it as dangerous to the well-being of ſociety. You ſee, then, the languid and critical ſituation to which the friends of humanity are reduced in Virginia. You know from the hiſtory of our ſtate, the number of objects that muſt neceſſarily come under our notice: in fine, you know how much we have to do, and how few there are to do it. Notwithſtanding, however, the many difficulties we have to encounter, and the gloomy proſpects with which we are on all ſides ſurrounded; there are ſtill a number among us, who, feeling a firm perſuaſion that it is a juſt and righteous cauſe in which we have embarked, are determined to continue their efforts ſo long as any good may reſult therefrom. Under this determination, then, and relying with confidence, that your views in the cauſe of humanity, are not merely local, we feel perfect freedom in ſoliciting ſuch pecuniary aid from

from you, as it may be in your power to afford us. Trufting you will weigh the fubject according to its merits, we reft fatisfied that your determination will be made upon the principles of extended humanity and benevolence.

Under a perfuafion, that the day will arrive, wherein the light of freedom will be univerfally diffufed through this land, we feel an ardent defire to unite with you, in every laudable effort to haften its approach: And may that Being, who rules the deftinies of the Univerfe, give us ftrength, courage and wifdom to perform thofe things only, that fhall appear juft in his fight.

Signed by order, and in behalf of a meeting of the Virginia Abolition Society, holden in the city of Richmond the twenty-fecond of the fifth month, 1801.

JAMES WOOD, *Prefident.*

Atteft.

FARLTON W. PLEASANTS, *Secretary.*

Adjourned till to-morrow morning at ten o'clock.

June fourth.

The Convention met.

Prefent:

Richard Hartfhorne, Prefident.

Adrian Hageman,	Walter Franklin,
Nehemiah Allen,	Samuel Bettle,
Daniel D. Waters,	George Williams,
Thomas Clement,	John Vaughan,
Robert Smith, jun.	Cyrus Newlin,
Thomas Harrifon,	John R. Fairlamb,
Robert Frazer,	Othniel Alfop,
James Milner,	

The committee to whom were referred the communications received yeſterday, introduced a report; which was read, and directed to be inſerted on the minutes, as follows,

The Committee to whom were referred the ſeveral communications from the Abolition Societies, and who were directed to ſelect and arrange ſuch objects as require the attention of the Convention, beg leave to report,—

THAT they have minutely examined the ſeveral documents ſubmitted to them, and are much pleaſed to find, that the generous principles of emancipation, are extending themſelves over the northern and middle ſtates—that the different Abolition Societies, are aſſiduous in their endeavours to leſſen the miſeries of thoſe unfortunate blacks and people of colour, who are within the pales of legal bondage; and in preſerving the freedom of ſuch as are privileged to enjoy the invaluable bleſſing. We however have to regret, that the intolerent and inhuman practice of ſlavery, in all its forms, appears yet to be but feebly oppoſed in ſome of the ſtates: and that in others, the exertions of the benevolent are inadequate to the taſk, without collateral aid.

In the States of New-York, New-Jerſey, and Pennſylvania, the laudable work of African emancipation, is rapidly progreſſing: in Delaware, it is reſumed with ſpirit and efficiency; but in Virginia, the ſyſtem is ſo far reſtrained by popular prejudice, and legiſlative encroachment, as to require the foſtering care of the Convention. We therefore propoſe, that means be deviſed, for aiding the Abolition Society of Richmond, in the proſecution of their arduous taſk; and ſuggeſt the utility

utility of eſtabliſhing a permanent fund, for the purpoſe of aſſiſting all ſuch Societies, as require pecuniary aid.

Conceiving alſo that the adoption of a ſyſtem, for the government of future Conventions, would give energy and ſtability to the organization, we propoſe, That a Conſtitution be formed, ſubmitted to the different Societies for their ratification, and returned to a Convention to be holden in this place.

Your committee deplore the neceſſity of repeating to you, that the horrid practice of kidnapping is perſiſted in, eſpecially in Maryland, in direct violation of the deareſt rights of Humanity, and in bold defiance of Law, and Moral Juſtice.

In North Carolina, laws exiſt, prohibiting individual emancipation; we ſuggeſt the neceſſity of an addreſs to the Legiſlature of that State, on the painful and momentous ſubject.

On reviewing the minutes of paſt Conventions we find the education of African children uniformly inculcated: and we truſt that the generous ſyſtem will be promoted and extended, by every poſſible means.

We have been informed by the Delegates from the Pennſylvania Society that two veſſels, engaged in the nefarious traffic in the perſons of their fellow men, have been captured and brought into the port of Philadelphia. One of them, the ſchooner Prudent of New-England, bound on a voyage from the coaſt of Africa to the Weſt-Indies, with a cargo of ſixteen ſlaves: this veſſel was condemned by the Diſtrict Court, and the blacks were placed by the Marſhal, under the care of the Society, who bound them by Indenture to ſuitable perſons, reſiding

reſiding chiefly in the country, adults for the term of four years, and minors, males, to the age of twenty-one, and females to the age of eighteen years. The other, the ſchooner Phebe, of Charleſton, South Carolina, captured by the ſame veſſel, while on a voyage from Africa to the Havanna, with a cargo of one hundred and ſixteen ſlaves. The Phebe is libelled, but the buſineſs has not yet proceeded to a legal termination. The blacks have, however, been placed out in like manner with thoſe above mentioned, except that bonds with ſureties have been given, that in caſe the reſult of a judicial inveſtigation ſhould be unfavourable, they ſhould be returned.

Believing that the preſent ſtate of public affairs, and the general temper of the public mind, are more favourable to the cauſe we have eſpouſed, than they have been for ſome time paſt, we recommend the formation and publication of a decent and manly addreſs to our fellow citizens on the ſubject: alſo, that an addreſs be preſented to the reſpective Abolition Societies, requeſting them to perſevere in well doing, for though ſome of them be reſtrained in the execution of their laudable work, and little is in their power to do, that *little* ſhould be done, if we wiſh to preſerve a conſcience void of the charge of omiſſion.

On behalf of the Committee,

THOMAS HARRISON, *Chairman.*

Council Chamber, June 4th. 1801.

The

The following refolution was laid on the table.

Refolved, That a Committee be appointed to examine and arrange, the various papers, and documents, belonging to the Convntion, on the fubject of flavery; that they prepare fuch an analyfis of their contents as may aid the important object of forming a correct hiftory of African flavery in the United States, and report the fame, together with fuch other information as they may be able to obtain, to the next Convention.

Adjourned till three o'clock this afternoon.

June fourth,—3 *o'clock*, P. M.

The Convention met.

Prefent:

Richard Hartfhorne, *Prefident*,

Adrian Hageman,	Walter Franklin,
Nehemiah Allen,	Samuel Bettle,
Daniel D. Waters,	George Williams,
Thomas Clement,	John Vaughan,
Robert Smith, jun.	Cyrus Newlin,
Thomas Harrifon,	John R. Fairlamb,
Robert Frazer,	Othniel Alfop.
James Milnor,	

The confideration of the report of the committee who had under care the communications addreffed to this Convention, being refumed, the following refolutions were adopted:—

Refolved, That that part of it, which relates to the fubject of affording pecuniary aid to the Richmond Society, be referred to James Milnor and Nehemiah Allen.

Reſolved, That ſo much of the above mentioned report, as relates to the formation of an eſſay of a Conſtitution, and the eſtabliſhment of a permanent fund, be referred to a committee of five, and that Adrian Hageman, Robert Smith, jun. Walter Franklin, John Vaughan, and John R. Fairlamb, be the committee.

Reſolved, That the formation of an eſſay of an addreſs to the reſpective Abolition Societies, be committed to Nehemiah Allen, Thomas Clement, and James Milnor.

The reſolution this morning, laid on the table, relative to the appointment of a committee to arrange and form an abſtract of the various papers and documents belonging to the Convention, on the ſubject of ſlavery, was adopted; and a committee, conſiſting of Thomas Harriſon, James Milnor, Walter Franklin, Samuel Bettle, George Williams, Robert Frazer, and Othniel Alſop, appointed to carry the ſame into effect.

Adjourned till ten o'clock to-morrow morning.

June fifth.

The Convention met.

Preſent:

Richard Hartſhorne, Preſident,

Adrian Hageman,	Walter Franklin,
Nehemiah Allen,	Samuel Bettle,
Daniel D. Waters,	George Williams,
Thomas Clement,	John Vaughan,
Robert Smith, jun.	Cyrus Newlin,
Thomas Harriſon,	John R. Fairlamb,
Robert Frazer,	Othniel Alſop.
James Milnor.	

The

The committee appointed on the ſubject of forming a Conſtitution for the government of future Conventions, introduced an eſſay, which was read, and ordered to lie on the table.

The committee appointed to conſider the ſubject of affording pecuniary aid to the Richmond Society introduced the following report, which was agreed to, and the Preſident is directed to pay the ſum therein granted, to the Delegate from that Society, for its uſe.

" *The Committee appointed to take into conſideration that part of the report of the Committee of arrangement, which relates to a grant of money, propoſed to be made to the Richmond Society,*

" *Report,*

" That, in their opinion, it would be proper for this Convention to grant the ſaid Society, the ſum of one hundred dollars, to aid them in the benevolent undertakings which they have engaged in."

Adjourned till five o'clock this afternoon.

June fifth,—5 *o'clock*, P. M.

The Convention met.

Preſent:

Richard Hartſhorne, Preſident,

Adrian Hageman,	Walter Franklin,
Nehemiah Allen,	Samuel Bettle,
Daniel D. Waters,	George Williams,
Thomas Clement,	John Vaughan,
Robert Smith, jun.	Cyrus Newlin,
Thomas Harriſon,	John R. Fairlamb,
Robert Frazer,	Othniel Alſop.
James Milnor,	

The

The following communication from the Alexandria Society, was read, and ordered to lie on the table:

To the Convention of Delegates from the different Abolition Societies, appointed to meet in Philadelphia on the firſt Wedneſday in June next.

THE underſigned have been deputed by the "Alexandria Society for the relief and protection of perſons illegally held in bondage," to acknowledge the receipt of a letter from the committee appointed by the laſt Convention, held in Philadelphia, and to forward an addreſs to the preſent Convention.

Our Society conceiving that any objects which might at this time be attained by the miſſion of Delegates to the Convention, would not be commenſurate with the expence which muſt neceſſarily be incurred thereby, deem it adviſable to decline ſending any. At the ſame time they declare that this omiſſion ariſes not from an indifference to the cauſe in which we are engaged, but from a conviction that the money requiſite for ſuch a meaſure may be applied more beneficially to other objects connected with the deſign of our aſſociation.

The underſigned judge it ſuperfluous to iterate ſuch facts and information on the ſeveral ſubjects of recommendation, as have been communicated in former reports to the reſpective Conventions; and few recent occurrences of intereſting note relative to the concerns of our Society, have taken place, which demand the particular regard of the preſent Convention.

Of

Of five ſuits for freedom, pending in the diſtrict court at Dumfries, at the time of our laſt addreſs, three have terminated in favour of the claimants; in the other two the petitioners were unſucceſsful.—About the cloſe of laſt ſummer, ſome perſons by the name of Thomas, a branch of a numerous and well known family of that name in Maryland, were apprehended in this town, by a perſon who pretended to claim them in right of his wife. The negroes prayed our court for leave to inſtitute a ſuit for their freedom, alleging they were free-born, being deſcended in the female line from a white woman. The court, however, judging them inhabitants of Maryland, refuſed to take cognizance of their caſe, and they were delivered up to the claimant, who promiſed to permit them to ſue without moleſtation in the county where he reſided but who, with a turpitude diſgraceful to human nature, ſold them before they reached his reſidence, to a ſlave driver from North Carolina. This purchaſer conveyed them to Virginia and lodged them in Dumfries jail, where by the aid of our Society they obtained a warrant and cited their holder before the magiſtrates of that place to enter into recognizance for their appearance at the next court to petition for leave to inſtitute a ſuit for the recovery of freedom. But the magiſtrates, whether through ignorance or wilfulneſs, inſtead of compelling him to give bond for their appearance as the law directs, undertook to decide on the validity of their claim and ſurrendered them to the holder, by which proceeding five perſons, in our opinion juſtly entitled to liberty, have been violently wreſted from their connexions, and conſigned, in all probability, to irredeemable ſlavery. The firſt claimant of the negroes took out a writ againſt one of the members of our Society who interfered

interfered in their behalf. The cauſe has not yet come to trial, but let it terminate as it may, it will immerſe us in ſome expenſe.

The unfortunate riſing of the negroes at Richmond laſt ſummer, partial and inconſiderable as it was, furniſhed a pretext for additional rigour toward thoſe wretched victims of oppreſſion. Nor were the labours of our Society altogether exempt from the effects of this renovated perſecution againſt the helpleſs Africans. The eſtabliſhment of patroles to prevent the unlawful aſſembling of negroes diffuſed conſternation among even the moſt guiltleſs, and deterred them in a meaſure from meeting for the pureſt purpoſes. The conſequence of this terror extended to our Sunday ſchool and produced ſuch an abandonment as rendered a temporary ſuſpenſion adviſable. It was accordingly intermitted during the winter, but has been lately revived by ſome of the individual members, the Society having virtually relinquiſhed its patronage, as no teacher of adequate merit could be obtained to take charge of it. The good effects viſibly reſulting from this inſtitution are, we truſt, amply ſufficient to ſtimulate its ſupporters to a perſeverance in ſo laudable an undertaking.

Situate as we have hitherto been in a State where intereſt tends to perpetuate prejudice and check conviction; where general cuſtom gives general countenance to the diſgraceful practice of ſlavery, and ſtifles the conſcious enormity of a crime which threatens, at one time or other, to involve in indiſcriminate ruin the innocent with the guilty where it is tolerated, connected with a policy where the weight of legiſlative authority was avowedly hoſtile to every movement of our proceedings, it is not ſurprizing that the difficulties we have had to encounter

counter ſhould be too potent for men of weak nerves or apathetick conſtitutions. In conſequence the number of our members has diminiſhed, but this diminution has, we truſt, rather condenſed than evaporated the ſpirit of the Society. And we cheriſh the hope that a more auſpicious era has commenced with our ſeparation from that State whoſe political profeſſions are at open hoſtility with its domeſtick conduct. We ſhall endeavour to improve to the intereſt of our inſtitution any advantage which this event may place within our reach.

Done at Alexandria, in the Diſtrict of Columbia, this 28th. day of May, 1801.

ARCHIBALD M'CLEAN.
GEORGE DRINKER.

An eſſay of an addreſs to our fellow citizens of the United States, on the ſubject of ſlavery, being introduced and read, it was, on motion,

Reſolved, That James Milnor and John Vaughan be a committee to conſider and reviſe the ſame, and produce it for further conſideration to-morrow morning.

It being ſtated by James Milnor, one of the committee under appointment to draft an addreſs to the different Abolition Societies, that, in conſequence of numerous other engagements, he apprehended he ſhould be unable to give that attention to the ſubject which its importance demands, and that he therefore requeſted to be releaſed; his requeſt was complied with, and Robert Frazer named in his ſtead.

The form of a Conſtitution introduced this morning, being now again taken up, and deliberately conſidered, was agreed to as follows:—

The Delegates from the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States, in Convention aſſembled, this ſixth day of June, A. D. 1801; *having been required by the Societies which they repreſent, to form a Conſtitution for the Convention; and being of opinion that many advantages would be derived from ſuch a meaſure, do recommend the following*

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I.

I. The Convention ſhall be called, "*The American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the condition of the African race.*

II. It ſhall be compoſed of ſuch repreſentatives as the reſpective Societies within the United States may think proper to appoint; provided that the number do not exceed ten from any one Society.

ARTICLE II.

I. The officers of the Convention ſhall conſiſt of a Preſident, Secretary and Treaſurer, who ſhall be elected annually by ballot.

II. The Preſident ſhall preſide at all meetings of the Convention, and preſerve order; he ſhall have no vote, except were there is an equality of votes; in ſuch caſe he ſhall have a caſting vote.

III. The Secretary ſhall keep accurate records of the proceedings of the Convention.

IV. The Treaſurer ſhall keep the money and other perſonal property of the Convention; he ſhall before he enters upon his office, give to the Preſident a bond in the ſum of not leſs than one thouſand

ſand dollars, for the faithful diſcharge of the duties thereof: He ſhall furniſh to the Convention annually, a ſtatement of his accounts, and ſhall pay all orders drawn in manner herein after mentioned.

ARTICLE III.

I. The Convention ſhall meet annually in the city of Philadelphia, on the ſecond Monday in January.

II. A repreſentation from three Societies ſhall be a quorum to tranſact buſineſs, but a leſs number may adjourn from time to time.

III. The Convention ſhall have full power to make ſuch rules and regulations as they may deem neceſſary for their internal government; provided the ſame do not contravene this Conſtitution.

IV. Additions and amendments may be made to this Conſtitution, on the propoſition of the Convention, and concurrence of a majority of two thirds of the members convened.

ARTICLE IV.

I. An acting committee ſhall be annually appointed by the Convention, who ſhall ſuperintend the publication of minutes, books, &c. the tranſmiſſion of addreſſes and other communications, and tranſact ſuch buſineſs of a general nature as may require attention during the receſs of the Convention.

II. All communications made to the Convention, during their receſs, ſhall be addreſſed to the acting committee.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE V.

I. All funds of the Convention, arifing from contribution or otherwife, fhall be at their fole difpofal; fpecial attention being at all times had to the exigencies of individual Societies.

II. All orders drawn upon the Treafury fhall be figned by the Prefident, and counterfigned by one or more members of the acting committee.

ARTICLE VI.

Special meetings of the Convention may be called in cafes of emergency, by the Prefident and acting committee, at the requeft of any two Societies of different ftates.

On motion,

Refolved, That copies of the above be tranfmitted as early as may be, to the different Societies for adoption, fhould it meet their approbation.

Adjourned till to-morrow morning at ten o'clock.

June fixth.

The Convention met.

Prefent:

Richard Hartfhorne, *Prefident.*

Adrian Hageman,	Samuel Bettle,
Nehemiah Allen,	George Williams,
Daniel D. Waters,	John Vaughan,
Robert Smith, junior,	Cyrus Newlin,
Thomas Harrifon,	John R. Fairlamb,
Walter Franklin,	Othniel Alfop.

The

The committee appointed to revise the addreſs to our fellow citizens on the ſubject of ſlavery, now produced the ſame, which being deliberately conſidered by paragraphs, was adopted as follows, viz.

To the Citizens of the United States.

Friends and Fellow Citizens,

VARIOUS Societies having been formed, in different parts of the Union, for the purpoſe of promoting the Abolition of Slavery, they have ſeveral times met in convention to deliberate on the beſt means of furthering the humane work they have undertaken.—We, the ſeventh aſſociation of Delegates from theſe bodies, now convened in the city of Philadelphia, appealing to the Searcher of hearts for the rectitude of our intentions, believe it our duty to addreſs you with a few remarks, to which we ſolicit your candid conſideration and attention. Believing as we do, that the benevolent Author of nature has made no eſſential diſtinction in the human race, and that all the individuals of the great family of mankind have a common claim upon the general fund of natural bounties, we have never heſitated to avow the objects of our inſtitutions, nor the honeſt means by which we hope for their ultimate attainment. Yet we are ſenſible that many of our fellow citizens have laboured under miſtaken impreſſions on both theſe points, and have aſcribed to us views as inconſiſtent with the policy of our country, as with our real proſpects. It is true we contemplate the deliverance from ſlavery of all the blacks and people of color in theſe ſtates, ſooner or later, by ſuch means as your humanity, and the wiſdom of our rulers may ſuggeſt;

and

and though we think the exiſting laws of ſome of the ſtates unneceſſarily ſevere; yet we pointedly diſavow any wiſh to contravene them, while they remain in force, or to hazard the peace and ſafety of the community by the adoption of ill adviſed and precipitate meaſures.

In common with the reſt of our fellow citizens, we ſincerely deplore the late attempts at inſurrection by ſome of the ſlaves of the ſouthern ſtates, and participate in the dreadful ſenſations the inhabitants in their vicinity muſt have felt on ſo awful an occaſion. It is fervently to be hoped that they may induce a weighty conſideration of the ſource of the evil, and of the beſt means of its future prevention. We are convinced, that ſo long as a relation ſubſiſts between cauſe and effect, and the preſent policy of thoſe ſtates is purſued, ſo long the deprecated calamity is to be dreaded; and while we all revolt with horror from the anticipation of an organization on the part of the ſlaves, we conceive there is a certain ſtate of degradation and miſery to which they may be reduced, a certain point of deſperation to which the human mind may be brought, and beyond which it cannot be driven.—If then the premonitory ſigns of this criſis have appeared, if a recurrence of the deſperate feelings which gave birth to the deſign is to be ſo awfully dreaded, ought not the attention of every humane mind to be exerted in deviſing adequate means for averting ſo enormous a danger? We advance with confidence our firm belief, a belief founded on mature reflection, that to be effectual they muſt be in many reſpects different from thoſe which have heretofore been adopted. An amelioration of the preſent ſituation of the ſlaves, and the adoption of a ſyſtem of gradual emancipation, while it would tend to remove the charge of inconſiſtency

conſiſtency between the conſtitutional declaration, and the legal proviſions of ſome of the ſtates; would alſo be an effectual ſecurity againſt revolt. If the ſeverity of their treatment were leſſened, and the hope of freedom for them or their poſterity were held forth as the reward of good behaviour, the ſlaves would be bound by perſonal intereſt to be civil, orderly, and induſtrious. It has been argued, that they are not qualified to enjoy the bleſſings of freedom, even under a gradual emancipation: but are they not rational creatures, and why will not the ſame methods which have civilized others, in the courſe of time alſo civilize them? A principal mean of effecting this purpoſe, would be to inſtruct them in the duties and obligations of religion, morality, and ſocial juſtice. We find that the cultivated inhabitants of different countries and even the individuals of the ſame country, have very different ideas on theſe ſubjects. Is it therefore to be wondered at that the poor illiterate blacks, who are ſo little inſtructed in the principles of Chriſtianity, and ſtrangers to the refined ſentiments which reſult from education; is it, we aſk, to be wondered at, that they are ſuſceptible of error and deluſion?

Fellow citizens of the ſouthern ſtates! we invite your calm and diſpaſſionate attention to the ſubject; and, with the aid of that Being to whom we muſt look for inſtruction in this, as in all our other undertakings, we firmly truſt that you will be enabled to deviſe ſuch meaſures as may terminate in your own peace, and ſecurity, and the benefit of that unfortunate race whoſe miſeries excite our ſympathy, and the improvement of whoſe ſituation is the object of our anxious ſolicitude and care.

Another

Another ſubject that requires general attention, is the inhuman crime of kidnapping, which, in ſome parts of our country, has recently increaſed to an alarming degree. The friends of liberty view with horror the perpetuation of this abominable practice, and the holders of ſlaves have no ſecurity for them, as property, during its continuance. There is therefore a common intereſt in the removal of the grievance; and we confidently look for the aſſiſtance of the humane of all deſcriptions in detecting and bringing to puniſhment, theſe ſhameleſs violations of the rights of their fellow men.

It is alſo a lamentable fact, that notwithſtanding the general repugnance of all well diſpoſed citizens to any further importation of Africans into this country, or concern in the infamous commerce in the perſons of our fellow creatures, notwithſtanding the prohibitions of the laws of moſt of the ſtates on this ſubject, and the ſtrict inſtructions of thoſe of the general government, upwards of two hundred veſſels, belonging to our own citizens, are employed in the purchaſe and tranſportation of ſlaves from Africa to the Weſt-Indies, and the ſouthern parts of this country.

The rage for this traffic is ſo far extended by avarice, that many perſons have riſqued their all in its purſuit; and it ſeems that nothing can ſtop the cruel and diſgraceful enormities which are thus committed, in violation of the dictates of humanity, and the laws and policy of our country, but a more general activity and exertion on the part of good citizens, in the diſcovery and proſecution of the offenders. So large a number of veſſels are fitted out for this trade, and ſent to the coaſt of Africa from the eaſtern ſtates, that we are induced earneſtly

APPENDIX.

BY an act of the Legiſlature of the State of New-York, paſſed the eighth of April, 1801, it is enacted:—

That every negro, mulatto or meſtee, within the ſtate, who at the time of the paſſing the act was a ſlave for life, ſhall continue ſuch, unleſs manumitted according to law. The baptizing of any ſlave, ſhall not be deemed to be a manumiſſion of ſuch ſlave.

Slaves under fifty years of age may be manumitted by the owners of them, on obtaining a certificate from the Overſeers of the Poor of the city or town where ſuch owner reſides, or the major part of them, or if in the cities of New-York or Albany, by the Mayor and Recorder of the ſaid cities reſpectively, that ſuch ſlaves appear to be under the age of fifty years, and of ſufficient ability to provide for themſelves, and having ſuch certificate regiſtered in the office of the Clerk of ſuch city or town, ſuch certificate or the regiſtry thereof, ſhall be concluſive evidence of the facts therein contained and forever exonerate the owners and their repreſentatives from the maintenance of ſuch ſlaves; ſlaves may be manumitted in like manner by will. In caſe of the refuſal of the Overſeers or of the Mayor and Recorder to grant ſuch certificate, the owner may apply to the Court of the General Seſſions of the Peace, who are authorized to grant the certificate.

Or they may be manumitted at any age by laſt will or otherwiſe, but the owners and their repre-

 ſentatives,

ſentatives, unleſs ſuch certificate as aforeſaid be obtained, ſhall reſpectively be liable for their maintenance.

All manumiſſions of ſlaves, made before the ninth of March one thouſand ſeven hundred and ninety-eight, although not in ſtrict conformity to the ſtatutes then in force relating to ſuch manumiſſions, ſhall be valid from the time the ſame were made, but the owners of ſlaves ſo manumitted and their repreſentatives ſhall be liable for the maintenance of ſuch ſlaves, in caſe of their becoming chargeable.

No ſlave to be brought into the ſtate by any perſon not intending to reſide permanently therein, nor unleſs he ſhall have reſided without the ſtate and have owned ſuch ſlave at leaſt during one year preceding his bringing in, and every perſon importing or bringing any ſuch ſlave, ſhall within one year thereafter, make oath or affirmation before a Magiſtrate of the above facts, and a certificate ſigned by the ſaid Magiſtrate of ſuch oath or affirmation, ſhall, within one month after the making thereof, be filed in the office of the Clerk of the city or county wherein the perſon importing ſuch ſlave ſhall reſide, and if any perſon ſhall bring or import any ſlave contrary to the intent and meaning of the act, or being permitted by the ſame to import or bring ſuch ſlave into the ſtate, ſhall neglect to make ſuch oath, and file ſuch certificate, then every ſuch ſlave ſhall be free.

Any perſon who ſhall ſell as a ſlave or transfer for any period whatever, any perſon who ſhall, after paſſing of the act, be imported or brought into the ſtate as a ſlave, and the factor or agent making ſuch ſale or transfer, ſhall be deemed guilty of a public offence, and forfeit the ſum of two hundred and fifty dollars, to be recovered with coſts of ſuit,

one

one half to the Treaſurer of the ſtate for the uſe of the people, and the other half to the perſons ſuing for the ſame, and every perſon ſo imported and ſold, ſhall be free.

Any perſon exporting or attempting to export any ſlave or ſervant born of a ſlave, and made free by virtue of the act, to any place without the ſtate, except as is therein after provided, and every perſon aiding or conſenting thereto ſhall be deemed guilty of a public offence, and forfeit the ſum of two hundred and fifty dollars, to be recovered and paid in the manner above mentioned, and the ſlave or ſervant ſo exported or attempted to be exported, ſhall be free.

Any perſon, not an inhabitant, who ſhall be travelling to or from, or paſſing throughthe ſtate, may bring with him any ſlave and take ſuch ſlave with him from the ſtate, and any inhabitant of the ſtate going a journey to any other part of the United States, may take any ſuch ſlave or ſervant as aforeſaid, but ſuch inhabitant ſhall bring back every ſuch ſlave or ſervant, and in default thereof, ſhall be deemed to have committed a public offence and to have incurred the forfeiture laſt aforeſaid, unleſs he or ſhe ſhall within ſix months after his or her return make proof to the ſatisfaction of a Judge, Mayor, or Recorder of the city or county wherein he or ſhe ſhall reſide, that ſuch ſlave or ſervant could not be brought back by reaſon of ſome unavoidable accident, and unleſs a certificate of ſuch proof, ſigned by the Magiſtrate, ſhall be forthwith filed in the office of the Clerk of the city or town in which ſuch inhabitant ſhall reſide; and every perſon who ſhall have reſided one year within the ſtate, and ſhall be about to remove permanently therefrom, may carry with him

him every ſuch ſlave as ſhall have been his property during one year then next preceding, provided that ſatisfactory proof be made before the proper Magiſtrate of the above circumſtances, and a licence be obtained to carry ſuch ſlave out of the ſtate, and every maſter of a veſſel receiving any ſlave, for the purpoſe of carrying him out of the ſtate without ſuch licence as aforeſaid, ſhall be deemed guilty of a public offence, and forfeit the ſum of two hundred and fifty dollars for every ſlave ſo received, to be recovered and paid in the manner above mentioned.

Every child born of a ſlave within the ſtate, after the fourth day of July in the year of our Lord one thouſand ſeven hundred and ninety-nine, ſhall be free, but ſhall remain the ſervant of the owner of his or her mother, and the executors or adminiſtrators of ſuch owner in the ſame manner as if bound to ſervice by the Overſeers of the Poor, and ſhall continue in ſuch ſervice if a male until the age of twenty-eight years, if a female until the age of twenty-five years.

Every inhabitant entitled to the ſervice of a child born after the ſaid fourth day of July, ſhall within nine months after the birth of ſuch child, cauſe to be delivered to the Clerk of the city or town whereof he ſhall be an inhabitant, a certificate in writing of his name and addition, and the name, age and ſex of the child, which certificate ſhall be recorded, and the record thereof be good evidence of the age of the child, the neglect to deliver ſuch certificate within nine months, ſhall incur a forfeiture of five dollars, and the further ſum of one dollar for every month of ſuch neglect.

The

The perſon entitled to the ſervice of any child born as aforeſaid, may within one year after its birth, elect to abandon his right, on filing a notification thereof with the Clerk of the city or town in which he ſhall reſide, but muſt maintain ſuch child until it arrive to the age of one year, and thereafter it ſhall be conſidered as a pauper, and liable to be maintained and bound out by the Overſeers of the Poor; the omiſſion to notify ſuch abandonment, ſhall be conſidered as an election to retain the ſervice of the child and render its maſter liable for its maintenance, until the period to which its ſervitude is limited as aforeſaid.

All perſons heretofore manumitted by the ſtate, and formerly the ſlaves of perſons whoſe eſtates have been confiſcated or forfeited, and were ſlaves at the time of ſuch confiſcation or forfeiture, and then and ſince reſided and ſtill reſide within the ſtate, and are unable to ſupport themſelves, ſhall be maintained as paupers by the Overſeers of the Poor of the proper city or town, at the expence of the ſtate.

Any perſon permiting his ſlave or ſervant to beg of others victuals or other neceſſaries, ſhall forfeit twenty-five dollars for every ſuch offence, one half to be paid to the proſecutor and the reſidue to the Overſeers of the Poor.

If any perſon ſhall by fraud or colluſion ſell or pretend to ſell or diſpoſe of any aged or infirm ſlave to any perſon unable to maintain ſuch ſlave, he ſhall forfeit the ſum of fifty dollars for each offence and ſhall be deemed the owner of ſuch ſlave and ſuch ſale or diſpoſition ſhall be void.

Any perſon employing, harbouring, concealing or entertaining any ſlave or ſervant knowing him to

to belong to any other perſon, without the conſent of the owner, ſhall forfeit to ſuch owner the ſum of twelve dollars and fifty-cents for every twenty-four hours, and in that proportion for a greater or leſs time not exceeding the value of the ſlave or of the ſervice of the ſervant, and any perſon guilty of harbouring, entertaining or concealing, or aſſiſting to convey away any ſlave or ſervant, who ſhall be loſt or die, ſhall forfeit to the owner the value of the ſlave or of the ſervice of the ſervant.

Any perſon trading or traficking with a ſlave or ſervant, either in buying or ſelling without the conſent of the owner, maſter or miſtreſs, ſhall for every offence forfeit treble the value of the article ſo bought or ſold, and alſo the ſum of twelve dollars and fifty cents to the owner of the ſlave or ſervant, and every contract ſo made with ſuch ſlave or ſervant ſhall be void.

Any perſon ſelling rum or other ſtrong liquor to any ſlave or ſervant without the conſent of his owner, maſter or miſtreſs, ſhall forfeit for every ſuch offence the ſum of five dollars, to be recovered in the name of the owner, and one half thereof ſhall be paid to the Overſeers of the Poor.

If any perſon ſhall by theft or treſpaſs committed by a ſlave or ſervant ſuſtain damage to the value of twelve dollars and fifty cents or under, the owner, maſter or miſtreſs of the ſlave or ſervant ſhall be liable to make ſatisfaction for the ſame to the party injured.

Any ſlave ſtriking a white perſon may, on proof of the ſame by the oath of ſuch perſon, be committed by a Juſtice of the Peace, and be tried and puniſhed as in the caſes of petit larceny, but in all other caſes ſhall have the privilege of trial by Jury.

No

No ſlave ſhall be a witneſs in any caſe except for or againſt another ſlave in criminal caſes.

Where any ſlave ſhall hereafter be convicted of any crime not puniſhable with death or impriſonment in the ſtate priſon for life, his maſter or miſtreſs may cauſe him to be tranſported out of the ſtate, provided that the Court before which ſuch conviction may be had, ſhall previouſly certify that the crime is of ſuch a nature, that tranſportation would be a proper puniſhment and that the court may alſo inflict ſuch other puniſhment as from the nature of the offence and the courſe of the law they may judge proper.

earneſtly to call on our brethren of thoſe parts, to aid in its ſuppreſſion; and ſurely as they have done away the evil of perſonal ſlavery among themſelves, they cannot want inducements to enforce the laws againſt ſuch of their citizens as ſet them at defiance, by purſuing a prohibited commerce, as ſhocking to the feelings of every benevolent mind, as it is offenſive in the eyes of the Almighty Ruler of the univerſe.

Finally, fellow citizens! as you value your own peace and that of your families; the quiet and ſecurity of our country; the obligations of our holy religion; and the favor of an overruling Providence; let us entreat you to enter into the conſideration of the ſubjects now ſubmitted to you. Aſſiſt in mitigating the preſent ills of perſonal ſlavery, by an amelioration of the ſituation of ſlaves; lay the foundation for an eventual extinction of the mighty evil throughout our land; commence a determined oppoſition to the wicked infractions of juſtice and the laws of our country; and may the Divine bleſſing attend you, in every attempt that you may be encouraged to make, for the good of your fellow men.

George Williams was appointed to aſſiſt the Secretary in examining the minutes, in order to report at next ſitting any buſineſs which may appear to be unfiniſhed.

Adjourned to four o'clock this afternoon.

June ſixth,—4 *o'clock*, P. M.

The Convention met.

Preſent:

Richard Hartſhorne, *Preſident.*

Adrian Hageman,	Walter Franklin,
Nehemiah Allen,	Samuel Bettle,
Daniel D. Waters,	George Williams,
Thomas Clement,	John Vaughan,
Robert Smith, junior,	Cyrus Newlin,
Thomas Harriſon,	John R. Fairlamb,
James Milnor,	Othniel Alſop.

Report being made that the only unfiniſhed buſineſs which appeared on the minutes, was the propoſed addreſs to the reſpective Abolition Societies; and an eſſay being produced, it was twice read, conſidered by paragraphs, and with ſome alterations agreed to as follows:—

To the Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

THE ſeventh Convention of Delegates from the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States, now addreſs you on the ſubject of their appointment. The concord and reciprocity of ſentiment which have attended our proceedings, will, we truſt, have a happy influence on the cauſe in which we are engaged, and aid in advancing the great intereſts of humanity and freedom.

The

The work which we have undertaken is not of a light and trivial nature. It is, on the contrary, one of the utmoſt magnitude and importance. To remove the foul blot which now ſtains our country, to break the chains with which ſo many of our degraded fellow creatures are fettered, and to qualify them for the ſtation for which a beneficent Creator deſigned them, are labours requiring the vigorous efforts,—the unremitting and perſevering endeavours of every friend to mankind throughout the world. We, therefore, earneſtly entreat that the cauſe may not be ſuffered to ſlumber in your hands, but that every favorable opportunity may be *eagerly* embraced of promoting the work of gradual emancipation.

The ſubject of the education of the blacks has claimed a ſhare of our conſideration. It is an object of ſo much intereſt that we cannot too often bring it into view. To adopt the language of the Convention of 1795, "when we have reſtored the "African to the enjoyment of his rights, the great "work of juſtice and benevolence is not accom-"pliſhed—The new born citizen muſt receive that "inſtruction and thoſe powerful impreſſions of "moral and religious truth which will render him "capable and deſirous of fulfilling the various "duties he owes to himſelf and to his country." On this point we particularly refer you to the ſentiments ſo forcibly expreſſed in the addreſſes of preceding conventions, and we ſtrenuouſly urge a ſtrict compliance with the recommendations therein contained.

The great increaſe of the practice of kidnapping, in defiance of every principle of moral and legal obligation, induces us preſſingly to recommend the moſt earneſt endeavours to root out the enormous evil

evil. In this inſtance there will be leſs to combat than on the general principle; the ſlave holders themſelves being intereſted in preventing this addition to the many calamities inflicted on the unfortunate blacks.

With feelings of ſorrow and regret, we learn that the horrid trade to Africa for ſlaves is ſtill continued by many of our fellow citizens. The hearts of thoſe who can contemplate this ſubject without emotion muſt indeed be deſtitute of every ſentiment of tenderneſs. It ſeems ſcarcely poſſible that men accuſtomed to the enjoyment of liberty, and partaking of the bleſſings of a free government ſhould ſo far diſregard the rights of humanity as to engage in ſo diabolical a commerce. The fact however, incredible as it may ſeem, certainly exiſts and to a very alarming extent, particularly in the eaſtern ſtates; we wiſh to arouſe your zeal on the occaſion and to incite your diligence and activity in carrying into rigorous execution the laws of the ſtates and of the general government againſt ſuch atrocious offenders.

The ſeveral Societies having expreſſed themſelves favorable to the adoption of a conſtitution for the government of future conventions, we have made it a ſubject of our deliberations and being of opinion that the meaſure would be attended with conſiderable advantages we have agreed on a plan which we ſhall forward to you. The proviſions of this inſtrument you will obſerve are of as general a nature as its objects would admit, and we hope it will prove acceptable to our conſtituents. If its preſent form ſhould be approved you will be aware of the neceſſity of its ſpeedy ratification. From the difficulty of framing a work of this kind, and accommodating it to the wiſhes and ſentiments of

of every individual, it is hoped that verbal criticiſms and alterations of an unimportant nature will be avoided; this point however we ſubmit to your prudent conſideration and deciſion. Should you think proper to adopt it we requeſt your aid in eſtabliſhing the contemplated fund.

As numerous miſrepreſentations of the views of our inſtitutions have gone abroad, and as the unhappy attempt at inſurrection on the part of ſome of the blacks in the ſouthern ſtates, has been called in aid of theſe miſrepreſentations by the enemies of liberty, and leſſened the activity of ſome of its friends, we have judged it prudent to publiſh an addreſs to our fellow citizens, copies whereof will be tranſmitted to you; you will obſerve from a peruſal of its contents that its object is alſo to bear our teſtimony, and produce individual exertion againſt the abominable practice of kidnapping and the cruel trade to Africa, which, as before obſerved, ſtill diſgrace our country. We anticipate the ſatisfaction of your approval of this meaſure, and invite your aſſiſtance by every means in your power, in giving it general circulation.

We have had our attention drawn to a ſubject, believed by our predeceſſors to be of conſiderable importance to the work of emancipation; the project of forming a hiſtory of ſlavery in the United States. With a view of forwarding this deſign, we have appointed a committee to examine and arrange the various papers and documents heretofore received by the ſeveral Conventions; to prepare an analyſis of their contents, and to report the ſame with ſuch other information as they may be enabled to obtain, to the enſuing Convention. We requeſt you to examine the minutes and addreſſes heretofore tranſmitted, for the purpoſe of

aſcertaining

aſcertaining how far the requiſitions of former Conventions have been complied with on your part, and if any information connected with the object in view remains to be afforded, a benefit will ariſe from its ſpeedy communication to the committee, and if individuals friendly to the cauſe, be poſſeſſed of any important documents relating to this ſubject, the committee will no doubt make a proper uſe of any information with which they may be favored.

It appearing that a change of the time of meeting in Convention, would be more generally convenient, we have concluded that the next meeting ſhall be held on the ſecond Monday in January, 1803.

Reſolved, That the above addreſs be ſigned by the Preſident, atteſted by the Secretary, and copies forwarded to the ſeveral ſocieties throughout the United States.

Reſolved, That James Milnor, Samuel Bettle, Walter Franklin, George Williams, and Othniel Aſſop be a committee to ſuperintend the publication of the minutes, addreſſes, and form of Conſtitution of this Convention, to tranſmit the ſame to the different Societies; and to give them at leaſt three months notice of the time of meeting of the next Convention.

Reſolved, That fifteen hundred copies of the proceedings of the Convention be printed, and diſtributed amongſt the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States.

And that fifteen copies of the minutes of each of the ſeveral Conventions, be bound together, and diſtributed in the ſame manner.

Reſolved,

Reſolved, That five thouſand copies of the addreſs to the people of the United States be printed and ſent to the ſeveral Abolition Societies, to be diſtributed in ſuch manner as they may direct.

Reſolved, That the thanks of this Convention be preſented to the Common Council of the city of Philadelphia, for the uſe of their Chamber, during the preſent ſitting.

ADJOURNED SINE DIE.

Publiſhed by order of the Convention.

OTHNIEL ALSOP, *Secretary.*

Philadelphia, June 6th. 1801.

APPENDIX.